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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/820,431	04/07/2004	R. Jeffrey Jordan	IGT1P327/AC055	7182

22434 7590 09/25/2006
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EXAMINER

HOEL, MATTHEW D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3713

DATE MAILED: 09/25/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/820,431

Applicant(s)

JORDAN ET AL.

Examiner

Matthew D. Hoel

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 July 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04/07/2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. Claims 1 to 3, 6 to 14, 16 to 21, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Burns, et al. (U.S. pre-grant publication 2002/0034977 A1, application 09/541,180).
2. As to Claim 1: '977 teaches a service center coupled to a gaming network and to an automatic teller network (Fig. 1). '977 has a player identifier structured to validate a user as a holder of a player account on the gaming network (cash out slips that maintain an account of the player's winnings, Abst.). '977 has a ticket reader (bar code reader 304, Fig. 1; cash out slips with bar codes, Figs. 2-4). '977 has a verifier coupled to the player identifier and the ticket reader, and structured to validate a ticket that is inserted into the ticket reader (validity of coupons verified, Para. 15). '977 has a payment dispenser structured to eject an amount of value after the ticket is validated (automatic currency dispenser, Para. 20).
3. As to Claim 2: '977 teaches a bill validator (paper currency reader 204, Para. 39).
4. As to Claim 3: '977 teaches a ticket printer (bar code printer 208, Fig. 1).

5. As to Claim 6: '977 teaches a service center coupled to a gaming network and to an automated teller network (Fig. 1). '977 teaches a ticket printer structured to print a ticket after receiving a command from the gaming network (printer controlled by CPU, Para. 13 and 14).

6. As to Claim 7: The printing command of '977 is generated from a gaming device coupled to the gaming network (printer controlled by CPU, Para. 13 and 14).

7. As to Claim 8: The ticket printer of '977 is structured to deliver a bonus generated on the computer network (pre-printed free play coupons, Para. 13).

8. As to Claim 9: The service center of '977 is a node on the gaming network (300, Fig. 1).

9. As to Claim 10: '977 teaches a standalone service center that is coupled to a gaming network (Fig. 1). '977 presents transaction choices to a user and accepts a selected choice (Figs. 5a,b). '977 verifies an identity of a user having a player account (player identification card, Para. 47). '977 accepts a ticket at a ticket reader (Para. 51). '977 validates the accepted ticket by comparing it to data stored on the gaming network (validity of cash out slips verified by CPU, Para. 49). The attendant then provides a benefit to the user by paying out on the cash out slip (Para. 49).

10. As to Claim 11: '977 provides winnings in currency (Para. 51).

11. As to Claim 12: The service center of '977 is structured to provide a benefit to the user by providing a new ticket to the user (pre-printed free play coupons, Para. 13).

12. As to Claim 13: The service center of '977 is structured to provide a benefit to the user by adding a benefit to the player account (player receives credit for game play

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corresponding to amount in account, Para. 12; pre-printed free play coupons represent value redeemable in free plays credited to player's account, Para. 13).

13. As to Claim 14: The service center of '977 is structured to establish a data connection with an ATM network (Para. 20 mentions coupons being dispensed by ATMs as opposed to the cashier station).

14. As to Claim 16: '977 teaches a method of servicing a player account, comprising accepting an input at a station that is coupled to a gaming network (Fig. 1), identifying a player having an account based on the input (Para. 19), accepting a ticket at a ticket reader (bar code reader at change station, Para. 50), verifying the authenticity of the ticket (Para. 51), providing something of value to the player (Para. 51), and recording that the ticket has been redeemed (complete accounting of player accounts, Para. 19).

15. As to Claim 17: '977 is able to add value to a player account (Para. 20).

16. As to Claim 18: The cashier station of '977 is able to eject winnings in the form of currency (Para. 20).

17. As to Claim 19: '977 is able to provide something of value by printing another ticket from the station (pre-printed free play coupons, Para. 13).

18. As to Claim 20: The station of '977 is not a gaming device (300, Fig. 1).

19. As to Claim 21: '977 teaches a method of servicing a player account at a service center coupled to a gaming network on which a plurality of player accounts are stored (Fig. 1, Abst.). '977 establishes a data connection to the gaming network (printouts controlled by central CPU, Para. 13-15). '977 accepts an identification of a user (player identification card, Para. 47). '977 authorizes the user when the information matches

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the stored user data (Para. 47). '977 accepts a ticket from a user (Para. 20). '977 compares the data from the ticket to ticket data stored on the gaming network (cashier station controlled by central CPU, Para. 20). '977 provides something of value if the data from the ticket matches the stored ticket data (Para. 20).

20. As to Claim 24: '977 provides currency to an authorized employee (Para. 51) and stores a record of providing the currency on the gaming network (complete accounting of player accounts, Para. 19).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

21. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

22. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

23. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977 in view of Bell, et al. (U.S. patent 5,505,461 A).

24. As to Claim 4: '977 discloses all of the elements of Claim 4, but lacks specificity as to printing a tax form. '461, however, teaches printing a tax form when a player cashes out his or her winnings (Abst., Fig. 2). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply the tax form of '461 to the gaming network of '977. It is widely known in the art that casinos retain the Social Security numbers of their patrons to report their winnings to the IRS, as well as to monitor transactions for possible money laundering. The advantage of this combination would be to automate the printing of the tax forms to make the tax reporting more efficient for the casino as well as the winners.

25. Claims 5 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977.

26. As to Claims 5 and 23: '977 discloses all of the elements of Claims 5 and 23, but does not disclose the player identifier being structured to validate the user as an employee. '977 does teach a player identification card to validate the user as a game player (Para. 47). '977 also has a change station operated by an attendant who dispenses winnings to the winner once the winner has been verified (Para. 51). It would be prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the player identifier of '977 structured to validate the user as an employee in order to prevent game players or unauthorized employees from gaining access to the change station. This could be done by issuing employees their own employee identification cards, which would otherwise be identical to player identification cards except for the codes stored on them. The advantage of this modification would be to enhance casino security.

27. Claims 15 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977 in view of Gatto, et al. (U.S. pre-grant publication 2003/0078094 A1, application 10/052,893).

28. As to Claim 15: '977 discloses all of the elements of Claim 15, but lacks specificity as to transferring account value from an account on the ATM network to the player account. '094, however, teaches transferring credit from an ATM account to make money available for a player to use (Para. 41). The player is able to take the ticket printed by the ATM and use it for subsequent play on the gaming machines. It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply the balance transfer of '094 to the gaming network of '977. '977 teaches a gaming network connected to an ATM network (Fig. 1). '977 teaches a cashier station, which can take the form of an ATM, dispensing winnings in cash or coupons (Para. 20). While '977 does not explicitly teach transferring credit from an ATM account to be used for gaming purposes, it would be obvious to do so. The gaming machines of '977 can accept cash (Para. 39). The advantage of this combination is that ATMs would increase the availability of cash, enabling casino patrons to bet more money at the casino.

29. As to Claim 22: '094 teaches establishing a data connection to an ATM network, and transferring money from an account on the ATM network to the player account of the authorized user (Para. 41).

Citation of Pertinent Prior Art

30. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Brandstetter, et al. in U.S. pre-grant publication 2003/0036427 A1, application 09/933,067, teach a ticket dispenser for a gaming machine. Luciano, et al. in U.S. patent 6,679,775 B1 teach a voucher gaming system. Stern in U.S. patent 6,110,044 A teaches validating gaming payout tickets. Bergeron in U.S. patent 4,764,666 A teaches player identification smart cards. Crevelt, et al. in U.S. patents 5,902,983 A and 6,347,738 B1 teach transfer of funds for gaming purposes. Luciano, et al. in U.S. patent 6,758,393 B1 teach a mobile cashier terminal. Acres, et al. in U.S. patent 5,655,961 A teach networked gaming devices including bonuses. Bell, et al. in U.S. patent 5,919,091 A teach a cash/cashless gaming machine. Petracca in U.S. patent 6,409,593 B1 and U.S. pre-grant publication 2004/0106453 A1, application 10/360,792, teaches ATM receipts being used to enter players into contests. Lieberman in U.S. patent 5,855,369 A teaches contests involving ATMs. Burns, et al. in U.S. patents 6,729,957 B2 and 6,729,958 B2 teach gaming tickets.

Conclusion


31. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew D. Hoel whose telephone number is (571) 272-5961. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. to Fri., 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

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32. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Xuan M. Thai can be reached on (571) 272-7147. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

33. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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AU 3713


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